

## **Historic, archived document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



# FOREIGN AGRICULTURE CIRCULAR

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Foreign Agricultural Service Washington D.C.



U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE  
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY

MAR 14 1968

WORLD WOOL PRODUCTION RECORDS

FW 1-68  
February 1968

## WORLD WOOL PRODUCTION AND TRADE

### Summary

World wool production in 1967 was estimated at 5,998 million pounds, 1 percent above that of a year earlier, with substantial increases in New Zealand and South Africa. Australia reported only a modest increase over the previous season. These increases were partly offset by declines in Uruguay and Argentina.

World raw wool trade in 1966 saw only slightly more activity over a year earlier. Exports remained similar to those of the previous year at approximately 3,188 million pounds. Increased activity was reported on imports, which totaled approximately 3,227 million pounds, 3 percent above 1965.

### Production

World wool production in 1967 (including the 1967-68 season in the Southern Hemisphere) was estimated at 5,998.1 million pounds, greasy basis, 1 percent above the 1966 clip. The 1967-68 season includes wool produced during the 1967 calendar year in most Northern Hemisphere countries, and wool produced during the year beginning July 1, or October 1, 1967, in Southern Hemisphere countries.

In the five major-producing countries of the Southern Hemisphere (Australia, New Zealand, Argentina, Uruguay, and South Africa) production was estimated to exceed last year's output by less than 1 percent or 30 million pounds. Higher production in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa was partly offset by declines in Argentina and Uruguay.

Production in other parts of the world was estimated to be up 4 percent in India and the USSR, 5 percent in Romania and Yugoslavia, and 6 percent in Italy. Decreases were reported ranging from 3 percent in Mexico and the United Kingdom to 7 percent in Ireland, 8 percent in Canada, 9 percent in the Syrian Arab Republic, and 33 percent in Japan. U.S. production in 1967 was 3 percent below a year earlier and is expected to show another small decline in 1968.

Wool: Production in specified countries, average 1956-60  
annual 1965-67 1/

Continent and country	Average :				Percent change	
	1956-60	1965	1966	2/ 1967	1967 1956-60:	1967 1966
	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Percent	Percent
North America:						
Canada.....	7.7	5.8	5.0	4.6	-40	- 8
United States 3/.....	308.8	241.1	235.1	228.1	-26	- 3
Mexico.....	9.6	13.2	13.8	13.4	+40	- 3
Other countries.....	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0	0
Total North America.....	327.1	261.1	254.9	247.1	-24	- 3
South America:						
Argentina 4/.....	465.6	465.2	467.4	460.8	- 1	- 1
Brazil.....	60.4	78.2	59.2	59.3	- 2	5/
Chile.....	48.7	56.2	56.2	56.7	+16	+ 1
Falkland Islands.....	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	0	0
Peru.....	20.9	23.1	22.0	21.6	+ 3	- 2
Uruguay.....	180.2	185.2	189.6	178.6	- 1	- 6
Other countries.....	15.4	16.5	16.7	16.7	+ 8	0
Total South America.....	795.7	828.9	815.6	798.2	5/	- 2
Europe:						
Western						
EEC						
France.....	62.9	61.0	61.5	61.5	- 2	0
Italy.....	30.4	34.2	32.7	34.5	+13	+ 6
Germany, West.....	11.5	6.8	6.4	6.5	-43	+ 2
Other countries.....	3.6	2.8	3.1	3.1	-14	0
Total EEC.....	108.4	104.8	103.7	105.6	- 3	+ 2
Greece.....	25.1	26.0	19.7	19.3	-23	- 2
Ireland.....	21.2	25.5	24.9	23.2	+ 9	- 7
Norway.....	8.0	11.0	11.7	12.0	+50	+ 3
Portugal.....	23.8	26.0	26.2	26.5	+11	+ 1
Spain.....	72.6	79.8	79.4	79.4	+ 9	0
United Kingdom.....	116.3	129.3	133.0	129.0	+11	- 3
Other countries.....	9.4	10.5	10.5	10.5	+12	0
Total Western Europe.....	384.8	412.9	409.1	405.5	+ 5	- 1
Eastern:						
Bulgaria.....	38.6	56.9	57.3	57.8	+50	+ 1
Hungary.....	15.7	22.4	22.9	23.4	+49	+ 2
Poland.....	20.5	16.5	17.6	17.8	-13	+ 1
Romania.....	44.5	56.0	57.5	60.6	+36	+ 5
Yugoslavia.....	31.3	27.7	29.5	30.9	- 1	+ 5
Other countries.....	25.0	27.0	27.1	27.3	+ 9	+ 1
Total Eastern Europe.....	175.6	206.5	211.9	217.8	+24	+ 3
Total Europe.....	560.4	619.4	621.0	623.3	+11	5/
USSR.....	698.8	787.0	817.9	850.0	+22	+ 4

(Continued)



Wool: Production in specified countries, average 1956-60  
annual 1965-67 1/

(Continued)

Continent and country					Percent change	
	Average				2/ 1967	1967
	1956-60	1965	1966	1967	1956-60	1966
	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Percent	Percent
<b>Africa:</b>						
Algeria.....	19.0	19.0	19.0	19.0	0	0
Morocco.....	34.9	30.9	30.9	30.9	-11	0
Tunisia.....	7.8	9.0	9.0	9.0	+15	0
UAR, Egypt.....	5.2	5.5	5.5	5.5	+ 6	0
South Africa <u>6/</u> .....	313.9	362.5	320.0	335.0	+ 7	+ 5
Other countries.....	14.2	15.1	15.1	15.1	+ 6	0
<b>Total Africa.....</b>	<b>395.0</b>	<b>442.0</b>	<b>399.5</b>	<b>414.5</b>	<b>+ 5</b>	<b>+ 4</b>
<b>Asia:</b>						
Iran.....	41.9	40.8	41.9	42.3	+ 1	+ 1
Iraq.....	24.7	28.0	28.0	28.0	+13	0
Turkey.....	91.2	94.8	97.0	99.2	+ 9	+ 2
Syrian Arab Republic.....	18.2	29.1	33.1	30.0	+65	- 9
India.....	73.8	77.2	78.3	81.6	+11	+ 4
Japan.....	7.5	1.7	1.2	0.8	-89	-33
Pakistan.....	32.5	37.5	40.0	41.0	+26	+ 2
Other countries.....	218.6	234.8	235.5	237.5	+ 9	+ 1
<b>Total Asia.....</b>	<b>508.4</b>	<b>543.9</b>	<b>555.0</b>	<b>560.4</b>	<b>+10</b>	<b>+ 1</b>
<b>Oceania:</b>						
Australia.....	1,578.8	1,662.8	1,762.7	1,769.6	+12	<u>5/</u>
New Zealand.....	538.3	694.8	709.4	735.0	+37	+ <u>4</u>
<b>Total Oceania.....</b>	<b>2,117.1</b>	<b>2,357.6</b>	<b>2,472.1</b>	<b>2,504.6</b>	<b>+18</b>	<b>+ 1</b>
<b>Total World.....</b>	<b>5,402.5</b>	<b>5,839.9</b>	<b>5,936.0</b>	<b>5,998.1</b>	<b>+11</b>	<b>+ 1</b>

1/ For summary purposes wool produced mostly in the spring in the Northern Hemisphere is combined with that produced in the season beginning July 1 or October 1 of the same year in the Southern Hemisphere. Pulled wool is included for most countries at its greasy equivalent. 2/ Preliminary. 3/ Includes pulled wool converted to greasy basis using 1.7 conversion factor. 4/ Revised to include wool exported on skins. 5/ Less than 0.5 percent change. 6/ Includes Republic of South Africa, Lesotho and South West Africa.

Foreign Agricultural Service. Prepared or estimated on the basis of official statistics of foreign governments, other foreign source materials, reports of U.S. Agricultural Attaches and Foreign Service Officers, results of office research and related information.

Australia. The second estimate of wool production for the 1967-68 season was estimated at 1,769.6 million pounds (comprising shorn, pulled, and wool exported on skins). Although up slightly from the year before, it was down 2.6 percent from the earlier forecast. Drought conditions in Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales were mainly responsible for the reduction in the wool clip from the earlier estimate.

The gradual recovery of sheep numbers that has taken place in Australia was attributed to better weather conditions during 1966 and the first half of 1967. Reduced slaughter due to the continued demand for sheep for restocking purposes, together with the reduced mortality rate of lambs in 1966 and 1967, have caused sheep numbers to show a better than expected recovery from the heavy drought losses experienced in 1965. The outlook for the current season is for a further recovery in sheep numbers, forbearing the extent of present drought conditions in some areas. More sheep are being shorn this season, but the drought conditions may reduce the yield per head.

New Zealand. Wool production for the current season was estimated at 735 million pounds, up 4 percent from the 1966-67 season and 1 percent over the earlier estimate. Larger production stems from greater sheep numbers, the largest in New Zealand history. Favorable climatic conditions and the upward trend in sheep numbers may have been largely coincidental with the country's urge to apply the expansion policies set out by the Agricultural Conference of 1964.

The New Zealand Government has assisted producers by means of tax concessions to build up flocks through farm development. In addition, farmers were permitted to postpone payment of taxes on the annual increase in livestock numbers until the time the animals were sold.

Argentina. Wool production continues to be disappointing, with the 1967-68 estimate set at 460.8 million pounds, down 1 percent from the 1966-67 season. This figure includes wool exported on skins, previously unreported as a part of domestic production. It is expected that approximately 33 million pounds will be exported on skins during the current season, compared with 26.5 million last season.

The decline in total Argentine production is attributed to lower production of coarse wools, reflecting a reduction in the number of Lincoln sheep. Producers' enthusiasm for the marketing prospects of coarse wools has declined because of the low prices they have received for coarse wools since mid-1966. The coarse wools approximate one-fourth of the total Argentine wool production. Production of fine wools and medium cross-breds, on the other hand, is expected to increase moderately during the 1967-68 season.



Uruguay. The current estimate for the 1967-68 season has been revised downward to 178.6 million pounds, 6 percent below that of the previous season. Adverse weather conditions during the drought period from January through April, followed by the heavy rains of the winter season, reduced feed supplies. Large numbers of sheep were lost during the floods in June and July. Others died because of poor conditions and over-exposure during the extreme record-cold nights that followed. Increased sheep slaughter for meat because of a Government prohibition against cattle slaughter also contributed to reduced numbers.

Unlike Argentina, most of the wool produced in Uruguay is crossbred fine; no carpet wool is produced.

South Africa. This country had an unexpected recovery in wool production. The 1967-68 season estimate of 335 million pounds is 5 percent above the previous season. Greatly improved range conditions from unusually good rains in early 1967 reflect the higher estimate. Sheep flocks were reported to have largely recovered from last season's drought. Improved management practices on African sheep farms have also enhanced wool production.

#### Wool Stocks and Prices

Carryover stocks of raw wool held by growers and merchants in producing countries, official bodies, and Wool Commissions at the beginning of the 1967-68 season were estimated at 320 million pounds, clean basis, more than 3 times that recorded at the beginning of the previous season and the highest since 1949-50. Well over 85 percent of these stocks were crossbred and carpet wools--the coarse wools. This tends to reflect the imbalance between supply and demand for these wools during the 1966-67 season.

Stocks in each of the five major-producing countries were up from the previous season. The New Zealand Wool Commission held substantial quantities of medium and coarse crossbred wools. In both Argentina and Uruguay stocks were up, largely because of smaller exports. Total carryover of fine wools was estimated to be only slightly higher than that of a year earlier. These fine wools are located primarily in Australia.

Since the beginning of the current season, world wool prices continue steady to higher for the fine wools and lower for the coarser grade wools. The decline in coarse wools was mainly due to excessive world supplies, reduced foreign and domestic demand, and increased competition from lower priced manmade fibers. Excessive supplies of the manmade fibers have also been a contributing factor.

Wool (actual weight): International trade, average 1956-60  
annual 1964-66

Continent and country	Average		1964		1965		1966	
	1956-60							
	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
	pounds	pounds	pounds	pounds	pounds	pounds	pounds	pounds
North America:								
Canada.....	3,548	19,261	2,417	19,762	2,924	19,791	1,901	19,436
United States.....	2/ 1,655	316,262	2/ 116	283,122	2/ 617	369,162	2/ 86	375,960
Mexico.....	0	13,325	0	25,094	0	31,143	0	25,500
Total North America.....	5,203	348,848	2,533	327,978	3,541	420,096	1,987	420,896
South America:								
Argentina.....	255,804	0	203,485	0	269,561	0	316,005	0
Brazil.....	7,582	764	37,040	33	32,130	157	39,295	104
Chile.....	16,541	579	12,177	1,323	12,499	866	12,392	2,039
Colombia.....	0	1,728	0	13,198	0	10,225	0	14,129
Falkland Islands.....	4,540	0	4,841	0	5,019	0	4,900	0
Peru.....	4,958	37	8,241	4	2,829	37	6,005	88
Uruguay.....	98,381	0	48,718	0	125,156	0	95,288	0
Total South America.....	387,806	3,108	314,502	14,558	447,194	11,285	473,885	16,360
Europe:								
Western								
EEC								
Belgium-Luxembourg.....	35,744	185,197	36,433	232,785	43,510	223,837	38,417	204,432
France.....	69,033	388,016	69,937	304,228	72,282	328,823	79,286	346,369
Germany, West.....	10,894	225,785	9,390	226,080	9,460	222,536	11,540	215,452
Italy.....	3,442	230,513	7,934	275,708	7,059	263,745	6,041	300,522
Netherlands.....	8,662	31,858	9,713	32,202	11,784	32,729	11,612	35,357
Total EEC.....	127,775	1,061,369	133,407	1,071,003	144,095	1,071,670	146,896	1,102,132
Austria.....	89	14,549	392	14,230	540	13,748	---	14,142
Denmark.....	1,091	5,054	1,640	6,408	1,521	6,291	1,585	6,537
Finland.....	90	11,177	10	3,109	10	3,078	10	3,805
Greece.....	437	4,175	174	3,203	122	6,014	19	5,710
Iceland.....	1,197	160	578	200	576	200	362	---
Ireland.....	18,861	12,063	16,222	12,593	27,531	11,105	21,092	12,494
Norway.....	1,932	1,873	2,235	3,911	4,100	2,862	4,300	3,300
Portugal.....	619	10,416	732	14,526	254	14,178	282	10,415
Spain.....	1,259	6,785	5,695	21,927	5,622	19,922	5,194	32,183
Sweden.....	1,417	10,953	1,177	10,740	866	12,163	1,464	8,847
Switzerland.....	188	14,628	873	13,063	891	15,199	1,244	11,470
United Kingdom.....	34,527	686,128	57,018	570,770	61,483	558,273	59,163	521,608
Total Western Europe 3/..	189,482	1,839,330	220,153	1,745,683	247,611	1,734,703	242,111	1,732,843
Eastern								
Bulgaria.....	0	4,468	0	4,758	0	3,272	0	---
Czechoslovakia.....	0	46,200	0	46,300	0	50,700	0	---
Germany, East.....	0	29,908	0	49,190	0	54,450	0	---
Hungary.....	660	6,768	2,851	9,612	1,372	6,272	3,911	10,255
Poland.....	0	42,137	0	34,618	0	38,228	0	33,400
Romania.....	1,400	1,090	1,900	1,800	2,600	3,100	---	3,300
Yugoslavia.....	1,629	13,486	505	33,279	398	35,559	2,117	25,750
Total Eastern Europe 3/..	3,689	144,057	5,256	179,557	4,370	191,581	8,628	180,705
Total Europe 3/.....	193,171	1,983,387	225,409	1,925,240	251,981	1,926,284	250,739	1,913,548
USSR.....	28,967	123,588	53,100	100,800	56,900	115,100	---	---

(Continued)



Wool (actual weight): International trade, average 1956-60  
annual 1964-66

(Continued)

Continent and country	Average		1964		1965		1966	
	1956-60							
	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
	pounds	pounds	pounds	pounds	pounds	pounds	pounds	pounds
<b>Africa:</b>								
Algeria.....	1,251	757	800	200	---	---	---	---
Libya.....	1,530	0	2,581	0	1,349	0	603	0
Morocco.....	6,778	416	4,333	345	1,967	606	1,945	511
Tunisia.....	1,420	140	690	364	700	400	---	---
UAR, Egypt.....	168	1,790	0	2,902	32	5,782	44	5,108
Kenya.....	1,864	28	2,875	106	3,019	100	3,171	100
South Africa <sup>4/</sup> .....	240,497	4,940	233,467	7,171	269,550	7,000	256,900	---
Total Africa <sup>3/</sup> .....	253,508	8,071	244,746	11,088	277,417	14,088	264,163	13,319
<b>Asia:</b>								
Cyprus.....	858	0	1,202	0	1,045	0	710	0
Iran.....	18,886	672	7,432	3,527	1,841	8,088	3,332	9,370
Iraq.....	13,905	212	10,121	452	11,000	570	---	---
Israel.....	103	1,580	43	2,983	66	4,075	48	4,026
Jordan.....	568	0	765	35	163	160	267	---
Lebanon.....	5,986	4,836	11,160	8,468	8,885	5,919	---	---
Turkey.....	9,123	9,154	10,558	17,322	8,107	19,555	4,010	22,916
Syrian Arab Republic.....	15,062	1,323	17,608	245	16,607	432	---	---
<b>China:</b>								
Mainland.....	36,507	18,846	48,940	42,152	45,814	25,839	45,689	15,292
Taiwan.....	0	360	0	3,200	0	7,600	0	11,400
Afghanistan.....	14,341	0	10,083	0	3,344	0	---	0
India.....	35,889	3,263	28,317	16,263	22,586	17,926	22,626	17,416
Japan.....	2,656	323,535	2,100	497,547	2,000	546,699	---	633,147
Korea, Republic of.....	0	1,414	0	2,380	0	2,700	0	3,600
Pakistan.....	29,027	1,210	21,585	3,000	24,147	3,000	15,840	---
Total Asia <sup>3/</sup> .....	182,911	366,405	169,914	597,574	145,605	642,563	133,552	727,297
<b>Oceania:</b>								
Australia.....	1272,356	6,840	1,400,657	8,800	1,455,647	9,100	1,384,709	9,500
New Zealand.....	471,614	280	552,600	3,700	548,900	1,200	623,900	1,400
Total Oceania.....	1,743,970	7,120	1,953,257	12,500	2,004,547	10,300	2,008,609	10,900
Total World <sup>3/</sup> <sup>5/</sup> .....	2,795,536	2,840,527	2,963,461	2,989,738	3,187,185	3,139,716	3,187,935	3,227,320

<sup>1/</sup> Preliminary. <sup>2/</sup> Washed, scoured or clean basis. <sup>3/</sup> Includes allowances for missing data for countries shown. <sup>4/</sup> Includes exports from South West Africa. <sup>5/</sup> Excludes wool on skins, re-exports where possible; imports in most cases refer to gross imports.

Foreign Agricultural Service. Prepared or estimated on the basis of official statistics of foreign governments, other foreign source materials, reports of U.S. Agricultural Attaches and Foreign Service Officers, results of office research and related information.

---

Official Business

## NOTICE

If you no longer need this publication, check here ☐ return this sheet, and your name will be dropped from the mailing list.

If your address should be changed ☐ PRINT or TYPE the new address, including ZIP CODE, and return the whole sheet to:

Foreign Agricultural Service, Rm. 5918  
U. S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D. C. 20250

Falling wool prices have been causing changes in the bloodlines of Australian sheep flocks. Breeders have been attempting to capitalize on lamb sales to regain their losses in income from low wool prices. However, these crossbred sheep wools have suffered a greater price decline than any of the other classes of wool. Breeders are now experimenting with other crosses for greater wool income with not too great a sacrifice of lamb weights.

1966 Wool Trade

World exports of raw wool in calendar year 1966 totaled 3,188 million pounds or almost the same as the 1965 revised figure of 3,187 million. About 84 percent of the wool entering world trade originates in the five major producing countries (Australia, New Zealand, Argentina, Uruguay, and South Africa) in the Southern Hemisphere. Most of this wool was exported to the major consuming countries in the Northern Hemisphere including Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the EEC countries.

Exports from the five major world wool producing and exporting countries were almost equal to shipments a year earlier. Shipments were up 17 percent in Argentina, encouraged by favorable fiscal policies and export incentives. Larger production increased New Zealand exports by 14 percent. Exports to Eastern Europe from these two countries continued to grow and more than offset reduced shipments to markets in the Free World. Shipments from Uruguay were down 24 percent from 1965, largely because of lower price offerings to producers. Australian and South African shipments were off 5 percent each from 1965. In Australia the severe drought was the principal factor contributing to lower exports.

Imports of wool into all consuming countries of the world increased 3 percent in 1966. Japan showed the largest increase, 16 percent over a year earlier, and replaced the United Kingdom as the world's largest importer of wool. (U.K. imports were down 7 percent in 1966.) Italy also had a substantial increase of 14 percent in wool imports. Imports in France and the United States were up 5 and 2 percent, respectively, but in each case imports were down substantially during the second half of the year. On the other hand, along with the 7 percent decline in U.K. imports, Belgium-Luxembourg and West German imports were down 9 and 3 percent, respectively.

World wool consumption in 1966 was estimated at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  percent above the previous year, despite the setback experienced by many textile industries in the second half of the year. (Early indications show that consumption suffered a decline in 1967.) Usage by the two largest consumers--the United Kingdom and the United States--was down 4 percent in each country in 1966. However, heavier consumption in Japan and most of the West European countries helped to make up part of the difference. In the case of the United States, the reduction in consumption was largely in that of carpet wools, seemingly because of the increasing substitution of manmade fibers in carpet manufacturing.